

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and wishes to inform them of airport security procedures currently in effect for departure from U.S. airports.

Airline and government officials responsible for protecting the safety of all air travelers, including diplomats and dignitaries attending the 57th UNGA, have implemented certain security procedures at United States airports in response to potential threats and actions by terrorist groups.

Visiting diplomats, dignitaries and family members should expect that their baggage and their person will be subjected to normal security checks, e.g., bags will be x-rayed and individuals will be expected to walk through metal detectors. If a diplomat or dignitary is requested to undergo any further screening, he or she may advise the screening officer of his or her status, present a diplomatic passport and request that any subsequent examination be conducted privately.

DIPLOMATIC NOTE

An individual airline may refuse to board diplomats or family members who decline to permit voluntarily the search of their personal baggage or person. To minimize potential difficulties, the missions are encouraged to communicate in advance with the passenger service representative of the airline involved and advise the airline of the travel plans of the visiting dignitaries and diplomats.

While it is regrettable that conditions are such that these procedures are necessary, visiting diplomats, dignitaries and family members should bear in mind that although inconvenient at times, the procedures are for their security and safety.

Department of State,

Washington, September 11, 2002

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "JBE", is located in the lower right quadrant of the page.